

Springfield Public Hearing

Judy Webber Jones (Project Ignition): I am the Project Ignition sponsor for our school, which just won the nation title for safe driving by State Farm.

I have been teaching driver's education for 21 years, and believe me, teenagers, as far as with adults don't listen that well. Parents have been teaching wear your seatbelts and everything that IDOT has been talking about as far as safety. This has been the first project, it's a service learning project, it's by far the best, because it's teens telling other teens to slow down and buckle up. Its focus is on speeding, seatbelt tickets and accidents.

I am going to have Josh Hawthorne, our student leader, come up and show you in our school and community how much of an effect it had. In just 3 months where we reached 345,000 and it ended up being billions, because the secretary of state put our 4 commercials in all the drivers license facilities in the state. The press recognizes us, and IDOT recognizes us and our partnership, because they saw that we are making Illinois's roads safer. Now I will introduce our student leader Josh Hawthorne.

Josh Hawthorne (Student from Project Ignition): Hi how is everyone tonight? As said, we are from Gibson City, way up north about 40 miles from Champaign; if you don't know where that is, it's a little away from Bloomington. We did Project Ignition, we were the national champs, and we had some very radical changes in our school. See these statistics of before and after seat belt usage by class. The diagram shows freshman-seniors, quite a big jump, and then we have seatbelt usage throughout the school before and after seatbelt project...increased by 90%. Then we have increase in speeding tickets

gotten from our local Police Department, there were 70 reported. We also had a decrease in accidents before and after the project.

Project Ignition was really great at our school, we had a lot of things going on and we reached a whole bunch of people in our town and around all the commercials we created. Which can be employed in the DMVs across the State, so you won't have to look at their videos and you can look at ours; I think they are pretty good. Were going to show you one here tonight, hopefully you like it, most people say they like it. It's kind of sad, made me cry a little, bit but that's what we did, play on emotion!

That's something that a lot of people seem to be slow on trying to do, but when you're really trying to reach somebody you have to play on emotion. We had an accident involving two brothers, you saw on the picture in the very beginning they were twins. Their senior year they got in an accident, and one of them died. The other one was permanently injured; well he can walk and talk but not very well. He has brain damage and cannot function well in society. We kind of brought that up and created videos and reminded everyone with signs around town, and everyone in town got involved.

Through their story State Farm created the Steer Clear Video to reduce insurance. It's known throughout the nation if a student watches it, that they can get their insurance reduced by 10%. I don't want to talk the whole time here so, I'd like to play one of our videos now. This is our 4th commercial that we created; it's titled, "Regret Involves Drinking and Driving." (After watching the commercial). That commercial was created entirely by students as was the music in the background, it was made in band class one day. So as you can see we have an enormous amount of talent and we found a way to put it all to use and we won 10,000 dollars, so we are going to put it to use even more. And

hopefully here soon, you will be seeing this commercial and the others everywhere. We have an internet website, we have business cards back there with that and we are trying to get them put on the local news stations to find spots with our money. And we also would like to play them at the Gibson drive-in movie, and if you are ever our way to watch it's quite nice, you will be able to see our commercial before every movie. Then there are also some thoughts of trying to get it into other movie theaters and trying to get the songs played on the radio. That song you heard there was actually professionally recorded and actually has a message that we had to cut out for times sake. Now I don't have any more so thank you and you all have a nice day.

Judy Webber Jones (not in picture, just voice): Like I said at the end the message is peers telling peers, it gets the message across. Because like I said, we have all been preaching for years and it hasn't been working. You can see the statistics up there, but when a teammate tells a teammate or a friend tells a friend they listen.

Nancy Ford (University of Illinois): Thank you very much for having us here tonight we are very pleased to talk about the projects we have here with Traffic Safety. Before I begin I want to introduce Carol ??? and Becky Landphier we will all be here to answer questions after presentations.

One of our projects is, Risk Reduction Project and its nearing completion. The goal of the project is to develop an alternative instrument to assist in the earlier identification of DUI offenders who will probably be chronic offenders. The project was created in response to concerns expressed by dui evaluations police officers and judges

evaluating the adequacy of the two assessment instruments that are in current use of the State of Illinois. The University has been providing administration research and oversight support to a work group that includes members from the: Department of Human Services Division of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse, the Secretary of State, the State Police, the Administrative Office of the IL State Courts and of course IDOT representatives. Also included are members of the Judiciary Representative of the DUI Evaluation Treatment Agencies and a project consultant. After looking at all the alternatives in use Nation wide, the adult substance use and driving survey, ASUDS, was selected as meeting the State's needs. This institution is currently mandated for use in Colorado, parts of Arizona, Hawaii and a number of East Coast States. UIS contracted with the developers of ASUDS to make changes to meet Illinois' needs. We are currently pilot testing the new institution.

We are also working on the Mobile Crash Reporting Project, it was initiated by IDOT to move from a paper field ridiculer crisis reporting system, to one in which the data could be used and entered directly into the field through mobile terminals located in patrol cars. This is intended to reduce the amount of time taken by law enforcement officers in filling out accident reports, and to reduce reporting errors. We began to work on the project in the summer of 2004; we have been assisting the implementation of the system and overseeing the training of law enforcement officers of Illinois, in the use of the MCR system software.

We recently completed a 3 year effort, which resulted in passage of legislation establishing DUI sentencing guidelines; we then produced both hard copy and CD-ROM versions of the DUI sentencing guidelines. The paper copy of the flow charts and dui

sentencing guidelines penalty, statements resulted in 12 massive charts and over 800 pages of penalty statements! But the CD-ROM version of the guideline contains electronically navigated flow charts and penalty statements in a highly accessible and searchable PDF format.

Most recently we have conducted 5 training sessions for Illinois Judges and States Attorneys, on the sentencing guidelines CD. In addition 4 trainings are planned for the summer of '06. About 190 manuals and 350 CDs have been distributed to Judges and States Attorneys thus far. The institute has also been delivering six additional training programs on behalf of the Traffic Safety Division.

The first is the States Attorneys DUI seminar. In November 2005 we offered a DUI seminar for States Attorneys in Springfield which examined issues, strategies and sanctions used in dealing with DUI offenders in court. The seminar format has enabled States Attorneys and Prosecutors, from throughout the State, to meet with each other and compare effective and innovative combinations of sanctions, remedies, and compliance measures.

Second, the members of the Cook County State's Attorneys Office attended DUI, State's Attorney seminar in Springfield. On June 15 and July 22 we will offer the seminar specifically for State's Attorneys in Cook County. The Cook County seminars will include many of the training topics covered in the regular seminar, but the format is being adapted to fit the scheduling needs of the Prosecutors in Cook County. We anticipate training 380 prosecutors this summer, alone.

Third, we hold the States Attorney and Probation Officer advanced DUI seminar once each year at the UOF at Springfield, with invitations being extended to all State's

Attorneys, Prosecutors and Probation Officers, that have attended either the DUI State's Attorney seminar or the DUI Probation Officer seminar in previous years. The advance sessions offer a multi-disciplinary opportunity for Prosecutors and Probation Officers to discuss and compare DUI issues, in an environment that encourages an open exchange of ideas. This year the seminar was held on April 7th.

Forth, the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts has formed a partnership with us and IDOT to offer an annual DUI Probation Officer seminar, it will take place May 15th - 17th, it is estimated that over 40 Probation Officers will be in attendance. In addition, now Cook County requires its DUI Probation Officers to attend a 2 day program delivered by the University. This year 120 Probation Officers delivered a workshop in Lagrange, IL on April 3rd-6th.

Fifth, on Sept 7th and 8th this year, 85 Secretary of State Hearing Officers, will attend a DUI training workshop on DUIs delivered by Bill White and others. Mr. White will present relevant research and resources from the DUI monograph, which was completed under a previous grant from the Division of Traffic Safety. Other topics will include Statutory Summery Suspension laws, Zero Tolerance laws, Driver License Sanctions and issues regarding driving relief for DUI offenders.

And finally a training of trainer's workshop, based on Bill Whites training curriculum and materials, has been taking place today and again tomorrow on the UIS campus. Mr. White is training a small group of Judges, Substance Abuse Professionals and members of the Probation Field. The small congregation of trainers will be able to form the basis of trainers, for the delivery of future workshops and online trainings.

Thank you.

Mary Kay Reed (SIU School of Medicine): I'm going to take this out because I have to walk and move around (talking about the microphone); I'm used to being in high schools with teenagers, so this is great because you are all awake and not wishing you weren't here, totally.

Ours is an injury prevention program called Think First, we have an exhibit in the back that gives an overview of our program. We started our program in 1990, and I actually started it with the goal of preventing injuries. I'm a nurse and I worked in the area of rehabilitation, so most of the patients that I took care of, years ago, were young people, teenagers. Most of them had been in motor vehicle crashes or had injuries sustained from very preventable causes. Most of them were young so, most of the patients I used to take care of were teenagers or in their early 20's. Honestly, the reason I started the program was: I was tired of taking care of kids that weren't going to get back to the way they used to be. All of our patients had either brain or spinal cord injuries.

And two of those people are with me tonight actually Danny Picks and Melinda Mueller; they both are speakers with our program. Danny works full time practically since he got injured in 1990. Melinda has moved on, is working and went to school. We have several speakers that have had gone on with their lives and have other jobs, but we are always thrilled to have her come be a part of traffic safety whenever she can. They speak from the heart; they lived through and survived very traumatic injuries. Danny had a brain and spinal injury, and Melinda had a severe spinal cord injury. So when we speak, I call myself a roadie. I go in, set stuff up and I take stuff and I'm the nurse, and I can tell

students, but when they speak to them it's real. They have been through it and I can share with them my experience, but I haven't gone through it, thankfully.

So our program is broadening, when we started there were a few states around the country and now Think First has grown. Now it is international and there are chapters all across Illinois. We are hoping to fill gaps and strategically, that is our plan in the future. Within the next year, we are looking at the State and identifying areas and partners, and how we can link with police in the area and really mobilize communities to come together.

I absolutely loved the kids of Project Ignition. I loved working with the kids, because they have such wonderful ideas and such talent. They really know how to connect, that is so true they know how to connect with their peers.

So like today we were at Riverton High School. Today we do a lot of mock crash reenactments to bring communities together to give the kids the experience of what really happens; the reality and afterwards. Today at Riverton, the Principle told me about a boy who was a sophomore, he on April 13th was in a crash right out in Riverton; totaled his vehicle, he had his seatbelt on and his airbag deployed. So I talked to him, I see Joharie back there, and I talked to him about the Save by the Belt Award, because I definitely want to get his name entered in that. I mean it was awesome to see him standing there, when 7 days ago he was in this crash. He's back in school. It used to be when I met kids, it was in the ICU with tubes in them, you know? just barely surviving. So were getting there, it is making a difference.

Kids it is cool to buckle up, they are catching on and it is there. It's a lot different then it was years ago, so I think these kind of students that are here are leaders and we

have a lot to be thankful for. I am thankful everyday to be a part of it and to be able to work with all of you. I appreciate your time and everyone coming out tonight, so please if you have questions about our program we have all kinds of stuff in the back, and thanks for being here and asking us to be apart of it.

Robert Crouch (Springfield P.D.): Thank you, I'm Sgt. Bob Crouch with the Springfield Police, being a partner of IDOT and being one of their grantees. Basically I just want to show you a couple of slides here, Melissa is setting up, and showing you some of the results we have had based on the finances that IDOT has provided us.

It's really astronomical what we can go out there and do with mental resources, if we just have the money to do it. As we know most Local Agencies and Government Agencies are struggling right now, and they don't have the money that they need to do the right things, and with partnerships with IDOT we can do those things. What we have is a three sided grant. We enforce speeding, enforce seatbelts and we enforce DUIs. We try to cover all those, the best we possibly can each year; we take an evaluation of the results to see how we are doing.

Anyways in a nut shell, what we have done with our DUI program is what we are most proud of. In 2001 we had 12 alcohol related fatalities in Springfield alone. We took a look at that, and saw that there was definitely a problem in Springfield. In 2003 we applied for an IDOT grant and got the grant. We hired two full-time DUI Officers, and what we did was reduced the alcohol related fatality rate down to two. In 2004 we reduced that in half we had one alcohol related fatality with 900 DUI citations in 2005. We maintained that level with one alcohol related fatality, so as you can see we went

from 12 in 2001 down to one in the last two years. Whelp my DUI officers tell me that they are making a lot fewer arrest, are they getting lazy? No. They are saying the drunks that are out there are a lot harder to find then they used to be, and that's the message that we want to get out. We don't necessarily want to go out there and arrest 4-500 drunks every year. If we can go out there and arrest 100 and the other 400 have decided that there is a better alternative, that's exactly what we want to do.

Thank IDOT and Director Stout for everything that they have done, we have a table back here with all the information and the graphs we can show you at a later time. Thank you.

Chief Deputy Randy Duvendack (Morgan County Sheriff's Department): Good evening, like he said I'm Chief Deputy Randy Duvendack from Morgan County Sheriff's Department, which is if you don't know, it's in Jacksonville, just west of here about a half hour. I'm a grant coordinator for our agency we have Image Grant. If you don't know much about our county we are a rural county, basically Jacksonville is about 25,000, if you include South Jacksonville. So it's basically a rural county. We're not unlike many other law enforcement agencies, particularly County Sheriffs Offices, where funding is limited and man power has been cut. So our officers therefore spend a lot of their time doing the basics of law enforcement. Besides that, they are now dealing with new type of crimes.

In methamphetamine related crimes, we spend a lot of time trying to detect "meth" labs and "meth" related crimes; the anhydrous thefts and all that goes with it, the pills and all that. As a result of shortage of manpower and trying to do all these other

things, the grant such as the image grant became very important to us. It's a means for us to once again emphasize traffic. Obviously like the Springfield Officer said, we emphasize occupant restraint violations, speed violations and impaired driving violations.

The first seatbelt enforcement zone we did in November and early December, I think we worked 96 hours, had 117 seatbelt tickets, and 129 total, so it was very amazing how many tickets we did write. We wrote up violations such as suspended drivers and uninsured motorists, so this was very important to us. And this just speaks to the issue of why these grants are important and why we appreciate the support we get from IDOT, because we typically, for us and for many other counties, traffic enforcement takes a back seat to other crimes. What goes on right in front of you, the squeaky wheel gets the attention. So if we do have an opportunity to hire some Officers back to work for some extra hours, for some of these other projects, to try to slow down speed, reduce impaired drivers and encourage seatbelt usage and occupant restraint, that's a good thing.

Hopefully it will all pay off in the end and again like I said I appreciate the support from IDOT, we get a lot of help from Mike Hendricks, a lot of good ideas, a lot of support from him again. Thank you very much for having me.

Captain Jim Wolf (Illinois State Police): Good evening, I didn't know I had to speak tonight, but being the new guy in town coming down from Rockford Monday morning. I am grateful to be here and to be able to publicly thank IDOT for the partnership we enjoy with the Illinois State Police. And with that partnership maybe we have been able to make the roadways safer. I was going through a traffic class several years ago through North Western, and one of the things I remember from the class was that traffic

safety/traffic enforcement involves the 3 E's- engineering, education, enforcement. And we partnered with IDOT in all three of these, and we have partnered groups like yours, also you know the engineering we have good relations with the IDOT engineering's if we identify a roadway that has a problem.

Through education, it is through forms like this, it is through media events prior to the big mobilizations we have on big major care holidays like the Forth of July and Labor Day weekend, it's MADD coming out to the roadside safety checks, it's the public groups here, that we can gather information to present it to the high school kids. The biggest thing though is the enforcement side and that's the main mission of the Illinois State Police. It's through higher backed programs like OREP, STEP and GABS, and maybe some of those don't mean a whole lot to you, but it focuses on speed, it focuses on seatbelts, it focuses on impaired driving, and through that we have been able to use these programs as a force multiplier. We hirer troupers back and target specific areas within the state, within my District to look for those people not wearing their seatbelt, people who are speeding, or people who are driving impaired. So it's though those programs that we have been able to make the roadways safer.

As a new district commander here in the area, I look forward to continuing that partnership and reaching out to groups like yours, to make the roadways safer. It is a core mission of the State Police and I thank you.

Deputy Mike Long (Sangamon County Sheriff's Department): Good evening, Good evening IDOT people attending. My name is Deputy Mike Long from the Sangamon County Sheriff's Office. We sincerely appreciate the partnership that we have with your

agency, and recently meeting Mike tonight for the first time I've recently stepped from this position. Deputy John "Defeback" was currently retired, he was our former traffic enforcement officer and he usually attended this presentation as well.

Real quickly, I want to hit what Chief Duvendack from Morgan County said, we're a fairly good sized county here for Sangamon County. 170 square miles and we have well over 200,000 people in this county which by average, which by county size in Illinois is fairly large. Currently we have one DUI deputy and myself in the traffic division. I primarily focus on speed and seatbelt those types of issues right now. Our DUI deputy James McNamara currently made over 260 DUI arrests last year and was recognized as one of the top cops in Illinois for his DUI enforcement. My position is involved with the "Click it or Ticket" roadside safety enforcement participation; I also conduct underage alcohol compliance, and also undercover alcohol enforcement action.

With the money provided by IDOT, with the grant provided by IDOT we will be able to focus our other money on other areas such as: our alcohol abuse wagon we have, our States Attorney's Office that has an assistant who is assigned to do nothing but handle traffic and we have one of the higher convictions rates in IL for their participation as well.

What I'm going to read to you now is a final report prepared by our Comptroller, Don Barber. The 2005 results are as follows: the Sangamon County Sheriff's Office continues to focus the agency on strong enforcement law as in years past. The Sheriff's Office continue to sign a full time Deputy, Deputy McNamara, to DUI enforcement and patrols. He has been working this program and produced outstanding results. Deputy McNamara made over 260 DUI arrests over the grant period last year.

This year for the first time, IDOT has taken the action to not require having the local matching portion of the grant; this is self-producing paperwork we have had to deal with. It also caused action taking and associating statistics accumulated by the Deputy, who also does traffic enforcement which is myself now.

Former Deputy ?Defeback? could not be counted towards the accomplishments of some of the goals of the grant, however goals established for our fulltime DUI enforcement duty were applied to the grant, during the '05 grant year, the Sheriff's Office had outstanding efforts and results of this program, there were 1940 lap hours, 760 contacts, and like I said over 260 DUI arrests. Even though the goal of the certain contacts per lap hour was not met, and the total contacts per lap hour were very slightly reduced, compared to the '04 grant year, we exceeded our goal of DUI arrests by 64 arrests. This is a remarkable accomplishment and places Deputy McNamara among the elite class of law enforcement professionals.

A tragedy during the grant year was the fact that 3 persons lost their lives in alcohol related accidents, this statistically speaking, unfortunate a typical number of persons losing their lives in such a manor. We set a certain reduction goal in the grant agreement which we didn't meet. Although we truly strive to have no people die in such a manor, we have set to a certain goal in the grant agreement; we hope to attain our goal in this coming year.

Again I would like to take the time for myself, and on behalf of Sheriff Williamson and our Comptroller, Don Barber, to thank IDOT in their participation and assistance with their grant; we look forward to working with you in the future.

Nicole Baer (Child Care Resource and Referral Network): I am one of the seven Occupant Protection Coordinators that IDOT has funded throughout the state. I cover West Central IL, which is 21 counties and my co-worker, who is also based in Bloomington with me, covers East Central IL and the 18 counties that kind of configure East Central.

Our main focus is to work to get that seat belt usage up to 90%. Our big kind of way we do that, is working with community groups and agencies that already have existing programs and try to help them to continue to spread out the message. And we also try to go into those communities that may not have the resources or may not have the ideas and try to incorporate new programs in those areas.

Some things that we have done, March Madness is held for the high school for basketball in Peoria and Bloomington. We worked with IL State Police Department District 8 to bring out the message. We have a big issue in Tazewell County currently with teen fatalities and speeding, so were really trying to get the message out to buckling up and slowing down, and to make sure they understand they aren't supposed to be drinking, but definitely not drinking and driving. Over those weekends we reached over 97,000 people with those messages so we really hope that was an effective way. We have gotten both the Peoria and Chicago Auto-Shows to kind of get the message of buckling up.

Our big focus right now is rural outreach for the month of May, where we are targeting a lot of the farm equipment companies, agencies, county agencies, and businesses with payroll stuffers and posters about getting the "buckle-up" message out. Three of the IL agricultural farm magazines have actually agreed to run an article on seatbelt safety

and buckling up, and that will reach over 270,000 people. So we thank IDOT for allowing us to be throughout the state and carrying out the message. Thank you.

Denny Pryor (MADD): Thank you for providing me with this opportunity to address you this evening. Our concern is about traffic safety in this area. I am Denny Pryor and I am representing the Sangamon County Chapter President of MADD. We have concerns that I will share this evening are represented by concerns of thousands of MADD members, I myself am a volunteer just like others across the state, we all share this common concern.

As you are well aware, drunk driving continues to be a sizable problem in Illinois, as one of the worst 15 states for alcohol related traffic fatalities, and a substantial number of drunken driving arrests each year. It is obvious that we need to take a more pro-active step to end deaths on our roadways. General deterrence, the concept of preventing a crime before it occurs, it's the most important strategy that we have that we can employ to reduce the growing number of alcohol related crashes. Impaired driving and seatbelt enforcement mobilizations exemplify general deterrence by concentrating and coordinating law enforcement efforts during a specific period of time, MADD believes that IL should take an advantage of the fact that well publicized check points can reduce alcohol related crashes and fatalities by 18-24%.

MADD would also like to see more emphasis of funding on our law enforcement system and ways to ensure accurate outcomes in our court rooms. By ensuring police departments have adequate training and equipment we are better able to remove impaired

motorists from our roadways. By instituting dedicated DUI courts we are better able to keep impaired motorists from re-offending.

MADD appreciates all the efforts put forth by IDOT this year. One that specifically comes to mind to me, that I attend on a monthly basis during the school year, is here in Sangamon County, Helen Tolen, the Regional Superintendent of schools for Sangamon County, has a DUI test force that is made up of high school students from Sangamon County. It's pretty impressive when you go to that meeting and see these kids involved in prevention; it's not just all about alcohol, its prevention in general. It's made up and comprised of area high schools that have prevention programs in place they have kids involved. They go through a crash reenactment every spring; they bring in area high school students and they put it on before prom to kind of send that message out. It's once again the youth that we need to approach starting early on. I thank IDOT tremendously for the support that they give Helen in this initiative. We also hope to continue as your partner in safety in the upcoming months. Thank you.

Mike Donovan (FACES4): Hi good evening, we are still fairly new and our name is FACES4. It stands for Families Against Chronic Excessive Speeding. I will explain the 4 in a minute. On October 10th of last year my 23 year old daughter and 4 year old grandson were killed in a crash that was caused by excessive speeding. They were hit head on by a speeding Ferrari. To top that off the gentleman had 62 violations; 32 for speeding (had a valid driver's license). Ten days before the crash he was in Page County Court in Wheaton, charged with flay loading the police, speeding, blowing stop signs, not using turn signals...he was given his forth court supervision of the year.

Illinois ranks one of the highest of speed related fatalities in the country. Over 1000 Americans die every single month due to speed related fatalities. I was not aware of this until I lost my daughter and grandson. I set up a website as a memorial to them; I did not want them to be forgotten. This was so avoidable, I was outraged.

I was hit by hundreds of emails; the one that stood out the most was by Dee Brandt, whom a lot of you probably already know anyways. Her son was killed March 11th, 2004 by a young man who was 21 years; he had 27 tickets and still had a valid driver's license. It is just incredible to me that no one is really doing anything about this. I talked to Dee and said would you like to help me. AIM got together with us, they get a lot of speeding violators in their impact panels, and they don't believe that they belong there. They belong with us, so they have been working hard with us. I contacted IDOT, they were so supportive they worked with us quite a bit over emails and telephone, helping us come up with a game plan to gain awareness, number one, and to try to set up a way to continue building that on a yearly basis; working with law enforcement, trying to get all the judges and everyone on the same page.

There is a major communications problem between Springfield and a lot of the city courthouses. Flat out they don't have time to check out all of the references because it is just a speeding ticket. Unfortunately that is the mentality, and it cannot be accepted. We need to have everyone on the same page, there needs to be accountability. If you kill someone going 40 miles over the speed limit, you should not get a slap on the wrist, get a ticket, get to keep your license and continue driving; that's something for the future. But I just wanted to be here today to introduce ourselves, so everyone can know who we are.

Please feel free to come talk with us we have a lot of information, a lot of statistics and we are just trying to get out the facts so that everyone is aware, to start with.

Brian Oliver (ABATE of IL): I did have some speaking points that I was not able to get off of my computer, I hope that it is not entirely ruined. The thing I would like to say is the thing that I am hearing is education over and over again. We stress education so strongly to our own members for our own safety, and we also go into high schools state wide. We have driver's education rider courses that we give across the state in all regions.

I just want to make everyone aware that this rider education course is self-funded, we taxed ourselves, and I was part of that movement. Every year we have to fight the government off; they want to take our money that we use to educate new riders. It has always been a very moving point; we get real concerned with it. This year it became real personal, this year my nephew got a motorcycle (I have no kids of my own), but I have been very close with my nephew. When he told me that he was going to start riding, it just scared the hell out of me, because the roads are very much more dangerous then when I started back when I was 16 riding on the road back 25 years ago.

Just the fact that the funding keeps getting raided by the government it makes me outraged, to think that we can lose our funding. This is our chance, this is what my nephew needs, I demanded, I assisted him go to this course and he agreed. This is what every new rider needs, and just the fact that our funding gets jeopardized every year when the money wants to be stolen away, just for the general funds. This is our money and this is about education. If you could just contact your representatives, all of you people

important enough in your positions. Just make your associates aware that this money is our money, raised by us, for us and it needs to be spent on us to make everybody safer.

Thank you.